

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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R 121630Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8086

INFO AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 3917

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, RW, US, BE

SUBJECT: NEW RWANDAN GOVERNMENT: RECOGNITION ISSUE

REF: STATE 134695

1. SUMMARY. BELGIUM RECOGNIZES STATES RATHER THAN GOVERNMENTS SO IS NOT CONFRONTED WITH PROBLEM OF RECOGNIZING NEW RWANDAN REGIME. FONOFF AFRICAN DIRECTOR LEBRUN VIEWS REGIME AS STABLE FOR TIME BEING AND SEES NO ALTERNATIVE FORCE TO THREATEN IT. GOB PLANS TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH NEW GOVERNMENT. IF HABYALIMANA WILL CONCUR IN WRITING TO BELGIAN DEMANDS ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE BELGIAN AMBASSADOR WILL RETURN FOR CONSULTATIONS ON BELGIAN-RWANDAN RELATIONS JULY 13. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF ASKED LEBRUN JULY 11 FOR FONOFF ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN RWANDAN AND POSITION ON RECOGNITION OF NEW REGIME. LEBRUN SAID THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRACTICE ESTABLISHED IN EARLY 60'S, BELGIUM RECOGNIZES STATES RATHER THAN GOVERNMENTS. RECOGNITION OF HABYALIMANA REGIME THEREFORE POSES NO PROBLEM FOR GOB. (FONOFF SPOKESMAN REITERATED THIS POLICY AS IT APPLIES TO RWANDA IN WEEKLY PRESS BRIEFING JULY 11. SPOKESMAN ALSO NOTED THAT NO BELGIAN HAD BEEN THREATENED OR HARMED IN COUP.)

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3. LEBRUN VIEWED HABYALIMANA REGIME AS STABLE FOR TIME BEING. ONLY SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZED FORCE IN RWANDA HAS SEIZED POWER AND THERE APPEARS TO BE NO ALTERNATIVE FORCE TO THREATEN IT AT PRESENT. LEBRUN NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT UNCERTAIN FACTOR INTRODUCED WHEN KAYIBANDA EVIDENTLY REFUSED HABYALIMANA REQUEST TO STAY ON AS FIGUREHEAD PRESIDENT. REMOVAL OF PRESIDENT'S PICTURE FROM PUBLIC BUILDINGS INDICATES HE IS OUT. HAD KAYIBANDA, WHO WIDELY POPULAR, STAYED ON, NEW REGIME WOULD HAVE HAD CACHET OF RESPECTABILITY AND GUARANTEE OF LONG LIFE. IN ANY CASE, FOR TIME BEING NATIONAL GUARD SEEMS TO BE IN FIRM CONTROL. THERE ARE REPORTEDLY SOME COMPLAINTS IN GITARAMA AREA BECAUSE OF EXCLUSION OF SO MANY GITARAMA POLITICIANS FROM POWER. (LEBRUN SAID HE KNOW OF ONLY ONE GITARAMA MAN STILL LEFT IN MAJOR POSITION, ALTHOUGH POSITIONS SEEM NOW TO BE DIVIDED FAIRLY EQUALLY BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH). IF COMPLAINTS SHOULD PROVE TO BE REFLECTION OF DEEP PUBLIC RESENTMENT OF COUP, THEY COULD LEAD TO PUBLIC PROTESTS. EXCESSIVE REACTION BY MILITARY COULD THEN BRING WIDESPREAD DISORDER. ALTHOUGH LEBRUN COMPOSED THIS SCENARIO, HE DID NOT SEE IT AS REAL PROBABILITY.

4. LEBRUN OBSERVED THAT REGIME MAY EVNETUALLY MOVE TO QUASI-CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT. THIS SEEMS TO BE INDICATED BY PRESENT SYSTEM IN WHICH SECRETARIES GENERAL IN VARIOUS MINISTRIES APPARENTLY HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUNNING MINISTRIES UNDER SUPERVISION OF MILITARY OFFICERS. THOSE OFFICERS, MOREOVER, MUST EVENTUALLY GET BACK TO RUNNING ARMY.

5. LEBRUN SAID GOB PLANS TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH NEW REGIME. HABYALIMANA HAS ACCEPTED ALL GOB DEMANDS RE MILITARY ASSISTANCE. FONOFF INSISTS CONCURRENCE BE PUT IN WRITING. IF HABYALIMANA COMPLIES, BELGIAN AMBASSADOR TO ARRIVE IN BRUSSELS JULY 13 FOR CONSULTATIONS ON BELGIAN-RWANDAN RELATIONS. (FONOFF SPOKESMAN, INCIDENTALLY, SAID AT JULY 11 PRESS BRIEFING THAT BELGIAN OFFICERS HAD BEEN OUT OF RWANDAN CHAIN OF COMMAND SINCE EARLY JULY. LEBRUN CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT THIS TRUE. ON ABOUT JULY 2, HE SAID, RWANDAN MILITARY HAD REMOVED BELGIANS FROM COMMAND POSITIONS).

6. LEBRUN SEES HABYALIMANA AS BASICALLY PRO-WEST. ACCORDINGLY, HE EXPECTS TO RECEIVE PRESSURE FROM NEW REGIME FOR INCREASED AID. CONFIDENTIAL

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FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD BELGIUM, HOWEVER, MAY LAST ONLY AS LONG AS GOB COMPLIES WITH AID REQUESTS AND MAY CHANGE IF AT SOME POINT BELGIANS FEEL CONSTRAINED TO SAY NO. STRAUSZ-HUPE

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